

## A Nation's Greatest Strength

The book of Obadiah, the shortest book in the Old Testament, was written about the downfall of a nation (Edom). The same things that led to Edom's fall will lead to the downfall of any nation. For the Edomites, we find no record of God. They claimed no allegiance to a god of any kind. "They were the very embodiment then of practical defiant godlessness, expressing itself in the deification of self, and the conviction that self was sufficient . . ." (Morgan 56). In our nation today, God has been taken out of the public classroom, and other like situations, because He has been taken out of life (cf. Rom. 1:25). God told Edom, "I will bring you down" because of its godlessness (Obad. 4). He will bring down any nation characterized by the same attitude (Prov. 16:18). Their self-sufficiency had brought them to a state of misplaced security. They had built a city (Petra), which they thought was impregnable. It now lies in ruins. We need to see that the strength of our nation lies not in nuclear warheads or other high tech defense systems (as important and impressive as these might be), but our ultimate strength must be in spiritual qualities. Isaiah wrote, "Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many, and in horsemen because they are very strong, but who do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the Lord!" (Isa. 31:1). "**RIGHTEOUSNESS** exalts a nation" (Prov. 14:34, emp. added).

Abraham Lincoln was elected the sixteenth President of the United States on November 6, 1860. February 11, 1861, he departed from his home at Springfield, IL, on a train trip that would take him across Ohio, western Pennsylvania, New York state, and on to Washington, D.C. Prior to his departure, Lincoln gave a brief, impromptu speech of farewell to a crowd of about one thousand that had assembled at the train depot. He said:

*. . . I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell. (qtd in Appelbaum 52)*

Lincoln believed deeply in the *presence* of God. He spoke of how He "ever attended" President Washington, and that he was "trusting in Him who can go with me." The Psalmist asked, "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?" (Ps. 139:7). Lincoln believed in the *providence* of God. He affirmed that God is "everywhere for good," and he affirmed his confident "hope that all will yet be well." God's beneficent *providence* is real and ongoing (cf. Gen. 50:20; Rom. 8:28). Lincoln believed in *prayer* to God. In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude he declared the Proclamation of National Fast-Day (August 21, 1861). This day of "humiliation, prayer and fasting for all the people of the nation" was "to the end that the united prayer of the nation may ascend to the Throne of Grace, and bring down plentiful blessings upon our Country" (77)

May we see the need to put God back into the life of our nation before it is too late.

-- Charles C Pugh III, June 27, 2018 --

- via *Messenger*, Bridge Street Church of Christ, New Martinsville, WV -

*What we do and what we say advertises what we are.*

## News & Notes

**MEN'S BIBLE STUDY: Each Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.**

**HOLIDAY GET-TOGETHER: This coming Friday, Dec. 16th, 6:00 p.m.** at the Fellowship Building. Pizza will be provided. A small monetary donation is requested to purchase incidentals (sliders, cheese and/or veggie trays, etc.). **Members are asked to bring only desserts.** Plan to attend this evening of food, fun, and fellowship. Sign-up sheet on the desk in the foyer.

**PICTURES FOR OUR UPDATED DIRECTORY:** If you did not have your picture taken last weekend for our "new" directory, please submit a recent 5x7 or 8x10 photo to Rico by **next Saturday, Dec. 17th.**

**PANTRY:** Rolled oats - large round box.

**REQUEST FOR PRAYERS: Sandy Sayre** - recent passing of two family members (Sue Collins' sister) 112 Pilgrim St., Inwood, WV 25428. **Charles Adkins** - heart problem (former member here). **Carol Williams** - Covid (Sharon Sprout's mom). **Herman McHan** (Columbiana congregation).

**SICK & SHUT-IN: At Home:** Susan & Randy Beagle, Jim Hadley, Linda Parkes, Mike West, Barbara DeLong, Claudette Miller, Cheryl Renfro Walker. **Fox, Pepperberry Suites, Chester:** David McCoy. **Weston, WV:** Rick Beck.

## You and Preaching!

There isn't a word that a preacher can say,  
No matter how lovely or true,  
Nor is there a prayer that his eager lips pray  
That can preach a sermon as you.

You vowed to serve Christ and men know that you did.  
They're watching the things that you do.  
There isn't one action of yours that is hid,  
Men are watching and studying you.

You say you're no preacher?  
Yes, but you preach a powerful sermon each day.  
The acts of your life are the things that you teach.  
It's also the things that you say.

So Christians, remember you bear His name.  
Your lives are for others to view.  
You are living examples, men praise you or blame,  
And measure all Christians by you.

Author Unknown, via *Ridgedale Reminder* [adapted]